

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Different Methods for Family Engagement

- **Key Message Bulletin Board:** Regularly update an eye-catching bulletin board in your center with a new key message. Engage children and parents in discussion regarding health messages.
- **Health Station:** Dedicate a table to feature a key message each month or quarter. Copy handouts, games, or recipes from the family engagement kit script and lay out for parents to take home. Have matching materials from kit sitting out and encourage families to try suggested activities or recipes.
- **Family Health Challenge:** Have families keep “score” of their healthy habits for winners to receive a prize at the end of the month or challenge period.
- **Include a Key Message:** Use a regularly scheduled parent meeting or open-house as an opportunity to discuss a key message. Use the matching script for a brief discussion or have families try suggested games or recipes from the kit.
- **Family Engagement Event:** Host a separate family engagement event for families to attend (i.e. a Healthy Snacks cooking class). See below for examples of health events.

Types of Family Engagement Events

Events at Child Pick-Up Events:

- Display 1-2 messages for parents to see when picking up their children.
- With each message, use matching materials as outlined in the kit script. This could include but is not limited to the handouts or activities.
- Have a staff member or parent nearby for each message to guide a discussion with parents.
- Share what changes have been made to menu and policies at your childcare center, and show off the hard work you’ve accomplished!
- Offer healthy snacks to show practices that have been put in place at the center that can also be used in family’s homes. Other incentives or give-away prizes may encourage parent participation.

Parent Nights/Open Houses:

- Display 3-4 messages for children and parents to learn about together.
- Hold a brief presentation for adults, going over the messages, while children play or interact with the FEP kit.
- Have time for parents to play with their children to see the kit in action.
- Provide 1-2 snacks and water for parents to sample some healthy snack ideas that can be used at home.
- Have children hold onto a passport (or stamp book) for the night. Award prizes to those who go to and receive a stamp from all of the tables, learning about all the key messages.

How Can HCHW Help You Engage Families?

- Explain and demonstrate the resources provided by your family engagement kit
- Work with you to decide which family engagement method would work best for your center
- Help decide which messages to display at your first event
- Suggest or design healthy snack and beverage options for the event by reviewing menus
- Estimate staffing needs of family engagement efforts